A YOUTH LASTING ONLY ONE DAY

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備忘録

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The Memorandum of Kyoko Okitegami

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THE TESTAMENT GIRL ARC AND EXTRA CHAPTER, COMPILED INTO ONE VOLUME! VOLUME 3 HITS STORES AUGUST 17TH!

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A WHOPPING 52 PAGES!!

COLOR COVER CAN BE FOUND TWO PAGES EARLIER!

ART MUSEUM

ANOTHER PEACEFUL DAY...

SECURITY GUARD OYAGIRI MAMORU

OYAGIRI MAMORU

BY NAMING ME MAMORU, AFTER MY GRANDFATHER, MY PARENTS HOPED TO GIVE ME A STRONG AND HEALTHY BODY.

T/N: MAMORU MEANS "TO PROTECT".

I KNOW I CHOSE THIS PATH MYSELF,

BUT I FEEL A TINGE OF SADNESS KNOWING THAT MY CAREER PATH IS PRETTY MUCH A ONE-WAY STREET FROM HEREON OUT...

I'M NOW EMPLOYED AT A LARGE SECURITY COMPANY, AND I "PROTECT" THINGS FOR A LIVING.

The Memorandum of Kyoko Okitegami

Created by NisiOisiN & Asami You ◆ And presented by mangastream.com

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PLEASE DON'T SUPPORT WEBSITES THAT DO.
CONSIDER BUYING THE OFFICIAL VOLUMES
WHEN THEY ARE AVAILABLE IN YOUR REGION.

AND THEN I MET THE THREE PERSONS WHO WOULD BRING ABOUT A COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENTS TO MY LIFE.

...OR SO I HAD CONVINCED MYSELF SIMPLY BECAUSE I BECAME EMPLOYED FULL-TIME.

OH.

THAT ELDERLY LADY WITH THE PURE WHITE HAIR HAS BEEN COMING QUITE OFTEN LATELY.

親切守

UM, EXCUSE ME, IF YOU'D LIKE, I COULD BRING YOU A CHAIR...

SHE'S ALWAYS COMES AND STARES AT THE SAME PAINTING. I WONDER IF SHE EVER GETS TIRED?

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HUH?!

OH! UM...

Y-YOU COME HERE OFTEN, DON'T YOU?

?

YES, YOU DO. YOU ALWAYS COME TO VIEW THE SAME PAINTING, AND YOU STARE AT IT AS IF IT WERE SUCKING YOUR SOUL AWAY.

I COME... OFTEN? ME?

DOES THIS PAINTING INTEREST YOU THAT MUCH?

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FUFU!

WELL, IT'S ONLY NATURAL, I SUPPOSE!

?

WELL NOW, IS THAT SO...

YES...

SO I'VE COME AND STOOD HERE MANY TIMES BEFORE, HAVE I...

IT'S AS IF YOU'VE FORGOTTEN TIME ITSELF, AND DRIFTED OFF INTO YOUR OWN WORLD.

I THINK YOU USUALLY STAND THERE FOR ABOUT AN HOUR...

ABOUT HOW LONG DO I USUALLY STAND HERE FOR?

Y-YOU THINK SO? YES, I DEFINITELY AGREE!

THIS PIECE OF ART HAS A CHARM ABOUT IT THAT'S WORTH ABOUT ONE HOUR OF A SINGLE DAY.

ABOUT AN HOUR, YOU SAY?

YES, I BELIEVE THAT SOUNDS ABOUT RIGHT.

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AFTER ALL, THIS PAINTING...

IS WORTH 200 MILLION YEN.

UMM...

200 MILLION YEN, SUCH A GRAND NUMBER, ISN'T IT?

NOTHING BEATS 200 MILLION YEN'S WORTH OF 200 MILLION YEN, EXCEPT 200 MILLION YEN.

MMHM!

JUST BEING SHOWN SUCH A BEAUTIFUL 200 MILLION YEN GIVES ONE THE ENERGY TO WORK THE ENTIRE DAY!

TWO HUNDRED MILLION

TWO...

BIL-

LION?!

親切守

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OH, NO.

OH, ARE YOU AN ARTIST?

I WOULDN'T CALL OUT THE PHRASE '200 MILLION YEN' SO MUCH IF I WERE YOU...

I WILL SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM IN JUST ONE SINGLE DAY!

OKITEGAMI DETECTIVE AGENCY
PRESIDENT

OKITEGAMI KYOKO

I AM A DETECTIVE.

I WORK FOR THE SAKE OF INDVIDUAL CLIENTS THAT REQUEST ME; SO IN THAT SENSE, MY BUSINESS IS SIMILAR TO YOUR COMPANY, OYAGIRI-SAN.

NOT AT ALL, IT'S JUST MY OWN PERSONAL OFFICE.

THE COMPANY PRESIDENT ...YOU'RE QUITE AN IMPORTANT PERSON.

IF YOU EVER FIND YOURSELF IN NEED OF MY SERVICES, BY ALL MEANS FEEL FREE TO CONTACT ME.

HOW DID SHE KNOW MY NAME...?

OYAGIR

OH, RIGHT.

SHE LOOKED AT MY NAME PLATE. SHOULD'VE EXPECTED NO LESS FROM A DETECTIVE.

OYAGIRI MAMORU

...HM?

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ONE OF THOSE THREE PERSONS WHO WOULD BRING ABOUT A COMPLETELY UNEXPECTED TURN OF EVENTS TO MY LIFE.

AND THAT WAS MY FIRST MEETING WITH KYOKO-SAN.

IT'S PRETTY EMPTY TODAY...

カリカリ

A FEW DAYS LATER

AND THE SECOND WAS...

...HM?

COME TO THINK OF IT, THE DIRECTOR SAID THAT WE'D BE GETTING A NEW PIECE FROM ONE OF OUR SPONSORS.

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BUT WHAT DO I DO IN THIS CASE?

IT'S MY DUTY TO STOP VISITORS FROM TAKING ANY ACTUAL PHOTOS,

LET ME TAKE A PEEK...

WELL, SINCE THERE AREN'T MANY VISITORS TODAY, AND IT'S JUST A CHILD DOING HIS BEST TO DRAW SOMETHING...

A SKETCH COPY...?

HE'S MANAGED TO REPRODUCE EVERY SINGLE DETAIL WITH JUST A SINGLE PENCIL?!

THAT'S NO ORDINARY ROUGH SKETCH!

DON'T YELL OUT LIKE THAT ALL OF A SUDDEN!

YOU SCARED THE CRAP OUT OF ME!

WHOA!

HOLD ON THERE, YOU!

AHH! WHOOPS!

SORRY ABOUT THAT!

SKETCH BOOK

10

THIS DRAWING...

UNFORTUNATELY, DRAWING HERE IS PROHIBITED.

DID YOU WANT SOMETHING FROM ME, OLD MAN?

THIS LITTLE BOY DREW THAT ALL BY HIMSELF...?

OH REALLY? I DON'T SEE IT WRITTEN ANYWHERE THAT I CAN'T.

ACK.

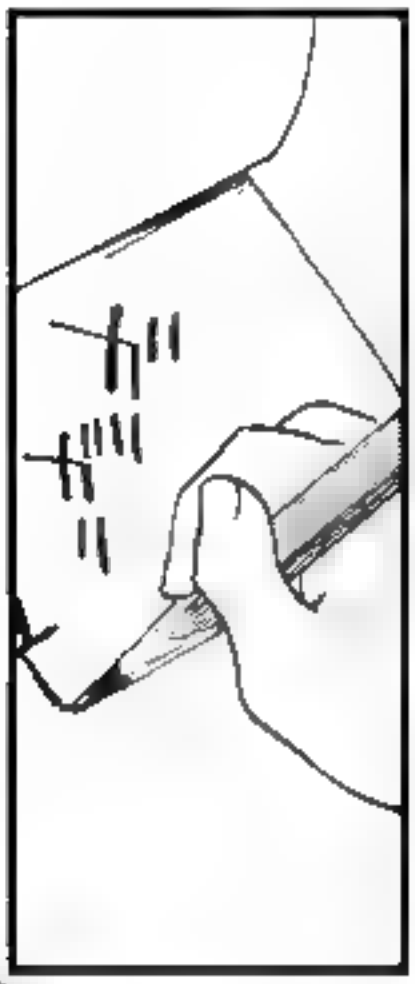
HMM...

IT'S NOT WRITTEN ANYWHERE, HOWEVER, IT'S A BOTHER TO THE OTHER VISITORS...

WHAT OTHER VISITORS?

.....

DESERTED...



HAKUI RIKU.

T/N. OYAGIRI'S NAME CAN BE READ AS "SHINSETSU" MEANING KIND

WHAT IS THIS A PAINTING OF, ANYWAY?

"MOTHER" IS THE TITLE IT WAS GIVEN, BUT I DON'T QUITE UNDERSTAND WHY.

MOTHER

COME TO THINK OF IT,

あ

NOPE.

WHAT, YOU DON'T KNOW?

DO YOU KNOW WHY THIS PAINTING IS TITLED "MOTHER"?

HEY...

WHAT DO YOU WANT NOW?

HERE, LOOK.

I SEE.

OH!

SO IT'S OUR 'MOTHER,' PLANET EARTH!

MOTHER

IT'S EARTH...

THIS IS A LANDSCAPE PAINTING.

BUT I CAN'T MAKE OUT THE EARTH... SO I GUESS IT'S AN ABSTRACT PAINTING.

HUH?

WHERE DO YOU SEE EARTH'S LANDSCAPE ON HERE...

YUP, THAT'S RIGHT.

A SINGLE PART OF IT!

!

LATER, OLD MAN!

NAH, I JUST FINISHED DRAWING, THAT'S ALL.

B-BYE NOW!

I WAS SUPPOSED TO TRY AND STOP HIM...

HM?

OH, I'M SORRY.

DID I MAKE YOU LOSE YOUR INSPIRA-TION?

I FEEL A SENSE OF REFRESHMENT WHENEVER I LOOK AT IT NOW.

BUT NOW THAT I KNOW THE MEANING OF THE TITLE "MOTHER,"

MOTHER

NOT ONLY DO I KNOW THAT IT'S WORTH 2 BILLION YEN,

A FEW DAYS LATER

OH!

KYOKO-SAN!

HUH?!

WILL YOU BE LOOKING AT THAT PAINTING FOR AN HOUR TODAY AS WELL...?

EXCUSE ME?

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LOOK AT IT?!

HUH?

ER, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT.

I MEANT, ARE YOU NOT GOING TO STAY AND STARE AT IT CLOSELY FOR A LONG WHILE LIKE YOU USUALLY DO?

YOU USUALLY LOOK AT IT FOR A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME, YOU SEE...

IS IT JUST ME, OR DOES IT SEEM LIKE SHE'S FORGOTTEN WHO I AM...?

I'M SORRY, BUT I DID LOOK AT IT...?

NOW THIS IS INTERESTING.

COULD YOU TELL ME A BIT MORE IN DETAIL?

NOW I JUST SOUND LIKE SOME KIND OF STALKER...

OHO...

I WONDER WHY THAT PAINTING GRASPED MY ATTENTION THAT MUCH?

THAT PIQUES MY CURIOSITY AS WELL.

I SEE NOW...

SINCE THIS IS ME WE'RE TALKING ABOUT, I PROBABLY MENTIONED THE PRICE OF THE PAINTING, DIDN'T I?

OH, UM...

YES, I BELIEVE YOU SAID IT WAS 200 MILLION YEN.

IT WAS AS IF YOU WERE IN A TRANCE.

A TRANCE...

FOR THIS PAINTING...

200 MILLION YEN, HUH...

NO, 2 MILLION WOULD BE MORE PRECISE.

PERHAPS 3 MILLION...

BUT I THINK 200 MILLION IS GIVING IT A BIT TOO MUCH CREDIT.

IT IS CERTAINLY A LOVELY PIECE, COMPLETE WITH THE ARTIST'S VERY SOUL INFUSED INTO IT,

WAIT, BUT I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WRONG IN PARTICULAR...

DID IT GET SCRATCHED OR ALTERED WHILE I WASN'T LOOKING OR SOMETHING?!

FROM 200 MILLION TO 2 MILLION?!

I'M HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS NOW THAT I'M BEING PUT ON THE SPOT, BUT...

GULP

...NOTHING, NOTHING AT ALL.

JUST TO MAKE SURE,

YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT NOTHING ABOUT THIS PAINTING HAS CHANGED?

PINPOINTING THE BACKGROUND SURROUNDING IT IS NOT A BAD IDEA.

DO YOU ALREADY HAVE AN IDEA, KYOKO-SAN?

OH, MAYBE IT'S NOT THE PAINTING THAT HAS CHANGED, BUT THE BACKGROUND SURROUNDING IT, SPECIFICALLY THE CREATOR?

LIKE, MAYBE THE CREATOR WAS REVEALED TO BE A DIFFERENT PERSON! SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

YES, BUT I HAVE NO CONCRETE PROOF.

WHOA, WHOA, WHOA, WAIT A SECOND!

AREN'T YOU GOING TO TELL ME?

NOW THEN, IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.

OKITEGAMI DETECTIVE AGENCY
PRESIDENT
OKITEGAMI KYOKO

IF YOU'LL HIRE ME, OF COURSE.

MY DEDUCTIONS ARE NOT FOR FREE.

...AND THEN CAME MY ENCOUNTER WITH THE THIRD PERSON.

A FEW DAYS LATER

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

HM...?

WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING?!

STOP THAT RIGHT THIS SECOND!

ゴトン

LET GO OF ME, YOU MANNERLESS IDIOT!

!?

IF YOU'D LIKE TO TALK, I'M HERE TO LISTEN...

SHIKIHARA... I'M PRETTY SURE THAT'S THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR'S NAME.

DON'T TELL ME WHAT TO DO! JUST CALL SHIKIHARA OUT HERE RIGHT NOW!

L-LET'S JUST CALM DOWN, ALRIGHT?

I HAVE NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT WITH SOME NINCOMPOOP WHO DOESN'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT ART!

D-DO YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST THE EARTH OR SOME-THING?!

EARTH, YOU SAID?

YOU UNDERSTAND THIS PAINT-ING?

...LET GO OF ME.

WELL...

UH...

ALTHOUGH THIS IS JUST ME REPEATING HAKUI-KUN'S WORDS...

OH WOW.

THAT'S WHY IT WAS NAMED "MOTHER"...

IT'S A LANDSCAPE PAINTING OF EARTH...

...ISN'T IT?

LET'S SEE IF YOU CAN ANSWER THIS QUESTION.

IT SEEMS YOU'RE NOT A COMPLETE IDIOT, AFTER ALL.

HOWEVER! THAT ONLY MAKES YOU LOOK EVEN MORE FOOLISH.

I SEE.

HOW MUCH DO YOU THINK THIS PAINTING IS WORTH?

NO, WAIT. RIGHT NOW HE'S ASKING MY OWN OPINION...

WHAT'S WRONG? CAT GOT YOUR TONGUE?

IF YOU DON'T KNOW, IT'S ALRIGHT TO SAY SO. NO ONE'S GOING TO SCOLD YOU FOR IT.

KYOKO-SAN FIRST SAID THAT IT WAS WORTH ABOUT 200 MILLION YEN.

BUT THEN LATER ON, HER ESTIMATE PLUMMETED TO ONLY TWO MILLION.

I'VE GOT TO THINK...

BUT I HAVE MY PRIDE TO UPHOLD.

I JUST DON'T KNOW.

I CAN'T ANSWER,

DON'T GIVE AN APPRAISAL; DEDUCE THE ANSWER.

IF SOMETHING HAD CHANGED ABOUT IT, THERE'S NO WAY I WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED.

EVERY DAY SINCE, KYOKO-SAN HAS NOT ONCE STOPPED TO LOOK AT THAT PAINTING.

CHANGED?

IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT CHANGE,

THEN HASN'T SOMETHING CHANGED DRASTICALLY JUST NOW?

HEH.

I APPLAUD YOU FOR YOUR WITTINESS.

LET'S LEAVE IT AT THAT AND SAY YOU PASSED.

ZERO YEN.

IN ITS CURRENT STATE, THIS PAINTING CANNOT BE APPRAISED.

WHA ...!

WHO'S THE ONE ACTING WITTY HERE?!

I'LL BE HEADING HOME, THEN.

SINCE ALL I DID WAS SMASH A WORTHLESS PAINTING.

THIS IS WHY I TOLD YOU TO CALL SHIKIHARA FROM THE START.

TELL 'EM THAT IT'S WAKUI AND THEY'LL UNDERSTAND.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO APPRAISED IT AS ZERO YEN.

THAT'S TRUE, BUT YOU KNOW THAT'S NOT THE PROBLEM HERE!

I'LL CALL SOMEONE OUT RIGHT AWAY, OKAY?!

TOMORROW NEVER CAME.

HOWEVER...

THEY FIRED YOU?

AND SO,

BUT I DIDN'T THINK THEY'D GO SO FAR AS TO FIRE ME...

YES...

I WAS PREPARED TO BE TRANSFERRED AND REPRIMANDED,

IT WAS AS IF...

BUT IT FELT LIKE THERE WAS SOMETHING MORE TO THIS MONEY.

AND I RECEIVED QUITE A LOT OF SEVERANCE PAY DESPITE THE FACT THAT I WAS GETTING FIRED...

I KNOW THAT I FAILED IN GUARDING MY AREA,

THEY WERE PAYING ME EXTRA TO KEEP QUIET ABOUT THIS INCIDENT.

WELL, THAT'S TERRIFIC NEWS!

NO.

AND SO YOU CALLED ME IN BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO PROTEST?

ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS CUT ME LOOSE, AND EVERYTHING ENDED HAPPILY...

AND THE INCIDENT WAS NEVER PUBLISHED ABOUT IN THE NEWSPAPERS.

TO THE MYSTERY.

I JUST WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH,

I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO MOVE ON.

IF I DON'T SOLVE THOSE MYSTERIES, I'LL BE BURDENED FOR LIFE.

AND ALSO WHO THAT ELDERLY MAN REALLY WAS.

HOW MUCH THE PAINTING WAS EXACTLY.

I WANT TO KNOW WHY THE ELDERLY MAN SMASHED THE PAINTING.

THAT'S A RELIEF!

I WILL BE ABLE TO BE OF HELP IN THAT CASE!

ゴト

I SEE, VERY WELL.

F-FIELD OF SPECIALTY?

IF IT WERE SOMETHING THAT I COULDN'T HANDLE, I WOULD HAVE HAD TO REFER YOU TO ONE OF MY COLLEAGUES.

MY FIELD OF SPECIALTY IS QUITE LIMITED, YOU SEE.

"I WILL SOLVE YOUR PROBLEM IN JUST ONE SINGLE DAY!"

IT'S WRITTEN RIGHT HERE.

OKITEGAMI DETECTIVE AGENCY
PRESIDENT
OKITEGAMI KYOKO

DID YOU NOT SEE IT ON MY BUSINESS CARD?

"I CAN ONLY TAKE ON CASES THAT CAN BE SOLVED IN ONE DAY."

THAT IS THE OTHER MEANING TO THAT STATE-MENT.

FOR I AM THE FORGETFUL DETECTIVE.

OH, THAT'S VERY PROMISING.

OH NO, YOU MISUN-DERSTAND.

MY MEMORY RESETS EVERY DAY.

YES.

FORGETFUL ...

DETECTIVE?

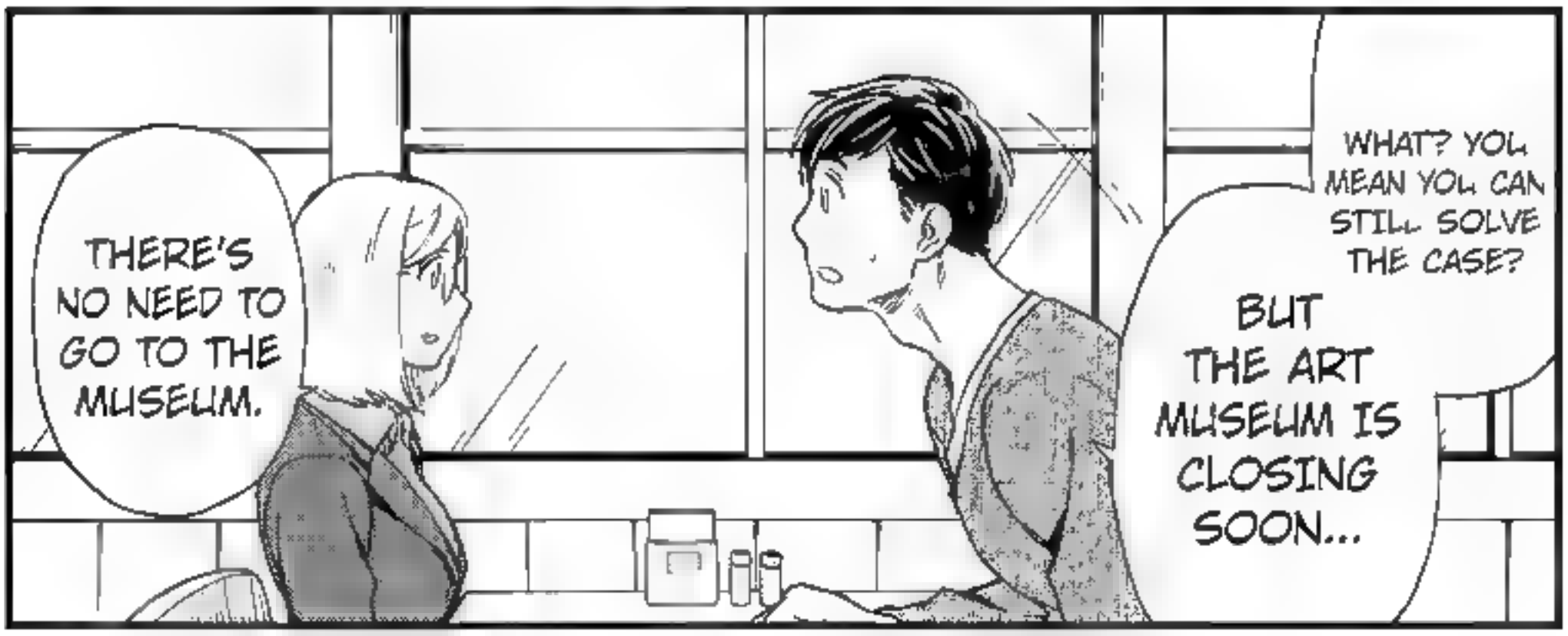
WILL ALL BE FORGOTTEN WITHOUT A TRACE BY TOMORROW.

EVERY-THING THAT I'VE HEARD AND DONE TODAY...

...WHICH MEANS YOU'VE PROBABLY FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT THAT PAINTING, THEN.
I SHOULD'VE JUST REQUESTED YOU ON THE SPOT BACK THEN...

THOUGH I FIND IT EXTREMELY HARD TO BELIEVE,
IT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY OUR CONVERSATIONS UP UNTIL NOW WERE A BIT STRANGE...

IT'S NOT TOO LATE, YOU KNOW?


THERE'S NO NEED TO GO TO THE MUSEUM.
WHAT? YOU MEAN YOU CAN STILL SOLVE THE CASE?
BUT THE ART MUSEUM IS CLOSING SOON...

YOU'VE SOLVED IT?!

YES, ALTHOUGH IT'S ALL JUST PURE DEDUCTION FOR NOW.

I WILL OBTAIN CONCRETE EVIDENCE LATER ON.

BECAUSE I'VE ACTUALLY SOLVED THE MYSTERY ALREADY.

W-WOW, THIS IS AMAZING!

OH!

DOES THAT MEAN YOU'LL TELL ME YOUR DEDUCTIONS FOR FREE?

EEK!

ABSO-LUTELY NOT!

R-
RIGHT...

JUST BECAUSE IT'S ALL SPECULATION, DOES NOT MEAN THAT IT'S FREE!

I WILL BE TAKING COMPENSATION, JUST AS WE AGREED.

NOT A SINGLE YEN WILL BE DISCOUNTED.

ALRIGHT THEN, LET ME DELVE INTO THE CASE NOW.

LET US LOOK INTO THE INCIDENT FROM WAKUI SAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

ㄱㅏ

...OKAY.

THAT HE COULDN'T BEAR TO SEE IT ON DISPLAY?

THAT'S MY GUESS.

MAYBE HE WAS ACTUALLY THE ARTIST, AND HE WAS SO UPSET WITH HIS OWN WORKMANSHIP,

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE REASON WHY HE DESTROYED THE PAINTING?

IF HE TRULY DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THE PAINTING, THEN I DON'T THINK IT WOULD MAKE SENSE FOR HIM TO CALM DOWN.

BUT IF YOU RECALL, WAKUI-SAN CALMED DOWN AS SOON AS YOU SAID THAT YOU UNDERSTOOD IT AS A "LANDSCAPE PAINTING OF EARTH."

INTER-ESTING VIEW.

ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU'VE SEEN THE PIECE'S INFORMATION PLATE SO MANY TIMES.

MOTHER

AND IF HE WERE THE ARTIST, THEN I'M SURE YOU WOULD HAVE KNOWN.

IF THAT WERE THE CASE, THEN WHY DIDN'T HE DO IT AS SOON AS IT WAS PUT UP ON DISPLAY?

ALSO,

TRUE...

BUT AS FAR AS YOU COULD SEE, NOTHING ABOUT THE PAINTING HAD REALLY CHANGED, RIGHT?

WELL...

ISN'T THAT BECAUSE SOMETHING ABOUT THE PAINTING CHANGED OVER TIME?

AT LEAST YOU SEEM TO BE HAVING FUN.

IT REALLY MAKES YOUR HEAD SPIN, DOESN'T IT?

UFUFU!

WELL, THEN... ARGH... HRMM...

NOW THEN...

カリカリ

UM...

IS THAT POSE BASED OFF OF A SCULPTURE OR SOMETHING?

I THOUGHT I'D MAKE IT EASIER FOR YOU TO SEE.

DO YOU NOTICE ANYTHING IN PARTICULAR ABOUT ME?

SOMETHING DIFFERENT...

THE ONLY THING DIFFERENT IS YOUR OUTFIT...

SOMETHING THAT'S CHANGED DRASTICALLY SINCE THE LAST TIME WE MET AT THE MUSEUM.

SLAT!

EXACTLY.

WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE HIDING YOUR FACE OR ANYTHING,

AND I CAN CONCLUDE THAT YOU'RE KYOKO-SAN BASED ON THINGS LIKE YOUR PHYSICAL BODY AND HAIR COLOR

HUH?

NOW, HOW IS IT POSSIBLE THAT YOU CAN STILL IDENTIFY ME AS THE SAME PERSON DESPITE MY HAVING CHANGED CLOTHES?

I CAN STILL SHOW VERY DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF MYSELF JUST BY CHANGING MY CLOTHES.

AT THE SAME TIME, EVEN WITHOUT CHANGING THE CORE OF MYSELF,

AND THIS CONCEPT APPLIES TO THE PAINTING AS WELL.

FACE, BODY STRUCTURE, AND HAIR COLOR.

IN OTHER WORDS, MYSELF.

?

NOT THE "PAINTING" ITSELF, BUT A "PART OF THE PAINTING."

NO,

SO IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE SURROUNDINGS, LIKE WE THOUGHT. DID THE PAINTING CHANGE BECAUSE OF A CHANGE IN THE ENVIRONMENT?

TO BE PRECISE,

THE CHANGE IN ITS WORTH...

WAS DUE TO THE CHANGE IN THE PAINTING'S FRAME BORDERING IT.

BY CHANGING THE FRAME, THE PORTRAYAL OF THE PAINTING WAS CHANGED GREATLY.

EVEN THOUGH THERE WERE NO CHANGES TO THE PAINTING ITSELF,

MOTHER

THE PAINTING'S FRAME...!

IN OTHER WORDS, THE PROBLEM WAS WITH THE COMPATIBILITY BETWEEN THE PAINTING AND THE FRAME.

BUT THE PAINTING'S TRUE FORM IS AS THE PAINTING AND THE FRAME TOGETHER AS ONE.

THE SUBJECT IN QUESTION IS THE PAINTING ITSELF.

!

WAKUI-SAN WAS THE FRAME MAKER!

THE FRAME MAKER.

THAT FRAME'S EXISTENCE RAISED THE WORTH OF THE MASTERPIECE TO ITS MAXIMUM, AND THE ONE WHO MADE IT WAS NONE OTHER THAN...

MAKES YOUR HEART SINK, DOESN'T IT?

SEEING THAT THE FRAME THAT YOU MADE SPECIFICALLY FOR THIS PAINTING...

WAS SWITCHED OUT WITH A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ONE.

MOTHER EARTH, THE PAINTING, WAS NOT THE SUBJECT OF HIS ANGER AT ALL.

WHEN I SAID THAT, HE IMMEDIATELY CALMED DOWN.

D-DO YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST THE EARTH OR SOMETHING?!

SO HE WASN'T SMASHING THE PAINTING...

BUT THE PAINTING'S FRAME?

HE WAS EVEN TREATED AS A VIP GUEST.

IT WOULD MAKE SENSE FOR HIM TO BE FRIENDS WITH THE MUSEUM DIRECTOR IF HE WERE THE FRAME MAKER.

THOUGH THIS IS ALL STILL SPECULATION ON MY PART,

AH!

IT HAPPENED BEFORE THE INCIDENT, RIGHT?

IT WAS PROBABLY SOMEONE FROM THE MUSEUM WHO MADE THE DECISION TO SWITCH THE FRAMES.

THIS IS ALSO JUST A GUESS BUT,

SO HE USED THE BEST FRAME IN THE GALLERY, THE ONE USED FOR "MOTHER."

THE DIRECTOR WANTED ITS DEBUT TO BE FLASHY AND MEMORABLE,

THE NEW PIECE FROM THE SPONSOR!

AND I GUESS, TO HIS MISFORTUNE, WAKUI-SAN HAPPENED TO BE VISITING AROUND THAT TIME AS WELL...

OH NO, IT'S NOTHING.

IS SOMETHING WRONG?

MAYBE THAT BOY...?

PERHAPS SOMEONE TIPPED HIM OFF.

AFTER ALL, IT WAS THE MUSEUM'S FAULT IN THE FIRST PLACE, FOR SWITCHING THE FRAMES.

SO THEN, OYAGIRI-SAN, MAY I ASK WHAT YOU INTEND TO DO NOW?

YOU COULD ARGUE THAT YOUR PUNISHMENT WAS A BIT UNCALLED FOR.

.....

NO, IT'S ALL RIGHT.

IN ORDER TO CONFIRM THE TRUTH, I COULD COME ALONG WITH YOU TO THE MUSEUM AND—

IF YOU INTEND TO FIGHT THEM ON THIS ISSUE, I WOULD BE HAPPY TO LEND YOU A HAND.

AND BESIDES, I DON'T BELIEVE THAT I'M THE BIGGEST VICTIM IN THIS CASE.

I DON'T PLAN ON GOING BACK THERE ANYMORE.

THEN WHO DO YOU SUPPOSE IS?

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AND IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT I FAILED IN PROTECTING IT.

I HAVE TO FACE RETRIBUTION FOR THAT.

IN MY OPINION, IT WAS THE PAINTING ITSELF, BORDERED WITH THAT FRAME.

BUT A PERSONAL RETRIBUTION FROM MYSELF.

AND NOT THE TYPE OF RETRIBUTION I'M GETTING FROM THE COMPANY,

BUT THANKS TO YOU, KYOKO-SAN, I'VE REGAINED MY PASSION AT THE VERY LEAST.

SO NOW I CAN MOVE FORWARD AND TAKE BACK WHAT I'VE LOST.

OH, MY!

AND THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH TO SATISFY ME.

TO BE HONEST, I HAD COMPLETELY LOST CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF RIGHT THEN...

I WANT TO BE-COME A PERSON WHO PROTECTS THINGS, YOU SEE.

THAT'S WONDER-FUL.

MANGA STREAM.com DO NOT MIRROR

WOW...

FLAP

FLAP

FLAP

INDEED, THE AMOUNT IS EXACT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PATRONAGE.

HERE IS MY PAYMENT.

SO,

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS NOW?

I FAILED IN GETTING YOU TO ADD ON ANOTHER CASE REQUEST,

SO NOW I'M COMPLETELY FREE FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.

?

7!!

IF YOU'D LIKE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THAT,

I'M OPEN TO THE IDEA OF YOU INVITING ME OUT TO DINNER. HOW DOES THAT SOUND?

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DOES THAT MEAN...

THAT I'LL BE THE ONE PAYING?

BUT OF COURSE.

キッパリ

SORRY, I'VE FORGOTTEN ALREADY!

BUT I JUST PAID YOU FOR THAT CASE, GO EASY ON ME, WILL YOU...

NEXT CHAPTER WILL ALSO BE AN EXTRA!

TO BE CONTINUED...